Claims

We claim:

1. A method for communicating audio messages using a two-way radio, comprising:

asynchronously transmitting an output audio message, the transmitting further comprising:

generating a first acoustic signal in an input device of the radio;

determining whether the first acoustic signal is a command, and if the first acoustic signal is a particular command, then responding to the particular command in an output device of the radio and processing the particular command, and otherwise storing the first acoustic signal in an output buffer of the radio and sending the first acoustic signal as an output audio message only when a communications channel is available to a transmitter of the radio; and

asynchronously receiving an input audio message in a receiver of the radio, the receiving further comprising;

storing the input audio message in an input buffer of the radio;

generating a second acoustic signal in the input device;

sending the stored input audio message to the output device only if the second acoustic signal is a play command.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein first and second acoustic signals are generated in a microphone, and the response is sent to a speaker.

3. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

activating an indicator when receiving the input audio message.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the indicator is a light emitting diode.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the indicator is a mechanical vibrator.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

sensing movement of the two-way radio in an accelerometer to generate an alternative command.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

selecting a silent mode of operation with a select switch.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

communicating input and output audio messages among a plurality of two-way radios via a wide area network.

9. The method of claim 8 storing the input and output audio messages in servers connected to the wide area network.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein the wide area network includes a packet switched network.

11. The method of claim 8 wherein the wide area network includes an Internet network.

12. The method of claim 8 wherein each two-way radio has a unique physical identification, and an associated logical identification.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein each logical identification is in a form of a phrase having a predetermined words, the words arranged according to a predetermined grammatical structure for a particular target language.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein a particular physical identification and an associated particular logical identification map to a plurality of phrases for a plurality of target languages, each target language having particular predetermined words and particular grammatical structure for the particular target language.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein the responding further comprising:

synthesizing a response message.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein the output device is coupled to a user appliance.

17. A two-way radio for communicating audio messages, comprising:

an input device for generating a first acoustic signal in an input device of the radio;

a controller for determining whether the first acoustic signal is a command or an output message;

an output buffer for storing the output message;

a transmitter for sending the stored message only when a communications channel is available;

a receiver for receiving an input message;

an input buffer for storing the input message;

an output device for playing the input message only in response to a play command.